

[ORIGINAL.]

TWILIGHT MUSINGS.

BY MARY PERCIVAL.

I love at morning's early dawn,
Ere Sol's bright beams impart
A dawning radiance to the scene,
To bless creative art.

I love to gaze on Nature's works,
And see her stores unrolled:
To mark the blessings of the year,
Its varied scenes unfold.

I love at twilight's pensive hour,
To wander forth alone,
When the gray mist of eve precedes
Pale Luna's gentle beam.

At this calm hour a halo bright
The gift of memory lends;
And pleasures past, and present, too,
A happy influence blends.

I love the springtime of the year,
When Nature smiles around;
When birds renew their gayest songs,
And flowerets strew the ground.

And summer, too, with all its charms,
Which tempt us to repair
To shady groves and forests green,
And quiet valleys fair.

I love to hear the autumn wind,
As sighing through the trees,
The harplike melody it bears,
And the cool, refreshing breeze.

And dear to me is winter, too,
Though icy fetters twine;
The frozen stream and snow-clad hills
Proclaim a Power divine.

[ORIGINAL.]

TWICE A LOVER.

BY E. F. LAWRENCE.

It was an afternoon in the Indian summer,
the briefest and most beautiful of the seasons.
For many a golden day, from the fair sunrise
to the royal sunset, the wonder-working forces
in the great laboratory of Nature had wrought
unceasingly, gradually developing the multitudi-
nous forms and hues of loveliness that every-
where garland the earth in her bridal time. In
the June days died the roses; the later blossoms
faded too, the cricket chirped no longer in the
wayside grass—but while decay lingered close
by, hardly staying his hand from his fell work,
the summer came back, warmer and ruddier from
her sojourn in the glowing South, and wander-

ing musingly in her old-time haunts, brooding in
the still woodlands and climbing the forest-
crowned slopes, irradiated them with her
presence.

I had undertaken my journey in no cheerful
mood. Young, enthusiastic, ambitious of a high
place in my profession, it was hard to pause on
the threshold of a career which my imagination ar-
rayed in brilliant colors, and curbing my eager
spirits, devote my energies to the establishment
of my health. But the necessity was imperative,
and reluctantly I had mounted my horse and
turned my back upon the scenes where I fondly
imagined distinction was to be won, and the
coveted glory attained. I had chosen to accept
my father's advice, to repair to the residence of
Judge Morgan, an early friend of his own, not
because he dwelt in a region rich in wild and
picturesque scenery, whose charms might tempt
forth the too industrious student, but I pleased
myself with the thought of the large library,
whose ponderous tomes I looked forward to
reading, while I lay quietly in the south piazza,
passively submitting to the ministrations of the
autumn sunshine and bracing air. I knew, too,
that Judge Morgan had a clear, acute intellect,
and a thorough knowledge of the theory and
practice of his profession, and I reflected that
the society of such a man must advance me in
those legal studies which I had been forced tem-
porarily to abandon. Yet the disappointment
lay sore upon my heart, and it was not until I
had left far behind me the neat suburban towns,
with their stylish, city-like air, and had been for
many hours in the open country, in the silence
and serenity that always dwell there, that I be-
gan to grow calm and content, and to feel myself
in harmony with the tranquillity of nature. The
shadows that lay across my path, as I skirted
along the boundaries of some orchard, whose
trees cast a portion of their fruitage into the
highway, had grown longer, and the sun was far
on his course, when I arrived in the vicinity of
Judge Morgan's home.

I could see its white chimneys gleaming from
the tall elms that rose above them, as upon gain-
ing an ascent I gave my steed a moment's rest,
and let my eye roam over the landscape. West-
ward the country rolled away in long, undulating
sweeps towards the horizon, dotted with white
villages and brightened by forests resplendent
with the gorgeous hues of the season, until its
waves were stayed by the Adirondacs; to the
northwest the blue, misty veil was half-raised
over the waters of Lake Champlain, and on the
east, close at hand, the mountains rose far up
into the sky, clothed with the bright-hued maples

from base to peak, like pyramids of blazing gold. It was the fruition of summer—the serene close of the perfect day. Its strange beauty stole over my spirit, as if some sweet melody my childhood had loved were floating through the sunset air, awakening the better feelings and resolutions that had lain dormant in the exciting struggles of the previous busy months, and stirring old memories that were hidden deep in my heart—the voices now hushed forever, the dear joys of home, and all the precious things which boyhood embalms for the solace of later years. Rousing myself from my reveries, I pressed forward, and just as the sombre twilight shadows crept over the distant hills, I galloped up the avenue and dismounted at the steps of my friend's mansion. I remembered the place well, and my first hasty glance around assured me that it was unchanged. On re-visiting some fine old country house, redolent of antiquity and having an individuality of its own, I dislike to find it modernized, and all its distinctive features obliterated. There was a movement within, and presently the front door was thrown wide open and Judge Morgan appeared on the threshold. It was the same figure, a little less erect perhaps, that I had known in my childhood, and the same frank, genial manner. Peering into the fast-gathering darkness, he asked, in a tone whose slight uncertainty could not disguise its cordial kindness:

"Is that Philip North?"

At my quick response in the affirmative, he made a step forward, checked himself, and waited until I ascended the steps.

"You are welcome, welcome, Mr. Philip!" And he gave my hand a hearty grasp. "You'll excuse my not coming down to meet you—a touch of my old enemy. So you are Philip North," he continued, as we entered the pleasantly lighted parlor. "Your father said I need not expect to find him reproduced in you, but you are like him. Yes, I should have known you anywhere. And so, you have overworked yourself in your making haste to be wise. Very foolish, Philip. It takes all summer for wheat to grow in, and if a blade or two happens to get ripe before the rest, what is it good for? Mere husk. It takes time to fill out the kernel. But we will build you up. Alice and Delia will show you all the lions in the neighborhood, only you must look to your horsemanship, or Alice will rob you of your laurels."

Until thus reminded by my friend, I had forgotten that the little girl who had been my childish playfellow, must have grown to womanhood. I had scarcely heard her mentioned, since one morning when I drove away from her father's

house, in all the pride of a boy first permitted to journey alone. I recalled her now, as she stood with one hand on the head of a huge Newfoundland almost as tall as herself, and shading her eyes with the other, while she watched the coach bowl away down the hill.

"But I do not know Delia, do I, Judge Morgan?"

"No—she came to us only a few years ago. She is my ward."

Tea was presently served, and the ladies appeared. How could I have ignored so quietly the existence of the graceful young girl who stood before me? She was about the medium stature, but the peculiar carriage of her finely-shaped head, and the proud dignity of her whole bearing, produced the impression of greater height. There was something in her movements that fascinated the eye—a mingled grace and queenliness. For the rest, her face was not beautiful, I thought. Her features were too irregular, her color too faint, but the heavy braids of lustrous dark hair were drawn away over a brow both intellectual and serene. The brown eyes were not brilliant, but you could discover in them a large capacity for loving and for suffering, too. The same expression characterized the mouth. It was mobile and sensitive. Now and then there crept about it a smile so strangely sweet that you longed to see it there oftener. But she was chary of it. It curved her lips once or twice as a little by-conversation went on between her and her father; then, too, the eye softened and the cheek flushed.

Delia had far greater pretensions to beauty. A blonde complexion, sunny brown curls, soft blue eyes, a charming figure, *petite*, but exquisitely moulded. Add to this, winning manners, not too vivacious to be gentle, and a low, coaxing voice.

"Alice," said Judge Morgan, "you must put your little Bessie through her best paces to-morrow morning. Mr. Philip is prepared to expect great things of your equestrian performances."

"I fear I shall not be able to prevail on Bessie to exert herself in order to justify your commendation, papa. She is indifferent to praise," returned Alice, gravely.

"I trust her fair mistress is not so insusceptible," I remarked.

She looked at me a moment.

"Applauses are easily won and are usually worthless. Besides," she added, more playfully, "Bessie is my good friend, and sometimes differs from me in opinion, and shows it frankly, as I like to have my friends do; consequently it happens that we sometimes come home in half an

hour, when I have made up my mind to a whole morning's ramble."

"And do you encourage such rebellion?" I asked, laughingly.

"Bessie has a will of her own, and I like her the better for it," answered Alice, abruptly.

The next morning, when we were cantering briskly along the road in the fresh, breezy air, I thought Miss Morgan really beautiful. The exercise had given her a fine color, and in the varied play of emotion which was constantly changing her expressive face, you forgot the irregularities of feature, if indeed you did not think them positive charms. Her style was original and striking. Lovely as Delia was, she looked tame and insipid beside her. We soon became excellent friends. Unaccountably to myself, I lost all interest in Coke and Chitty, and grew strangely reconciled to my involuntary exile from active life. We passed the mornings on horseback, exploring all the picturesque places near and remote; the evenings fled too quickly with reading and merry talk, and when Alice and I were alone, in long, confidential conversations.

I never met with such sympathy as she gave me. Without echoing my sentiments, or concealing her own, which she maintained was destructive of real friendship, always uttering herself frankly, sometimes even *brusquely*, she yet encouraged me to reveal to her thoughts, aspirations, dreams, which I had never before disclosed to any one. Was I haunted by any half-formed doubt? She had known the same uncertainty, and could indicate its cure. Did any emotion waver tremblingly on my lips? She had precisely the words to complete the broken sentence. These conferences grew exceedingly pleasant to me. They were the golden threads in the plain web of my daily life. I only caught glimpses of her character. I felt that beyond what was revealed were greater charms, and this drew me on. I knew that she had faults—she was proud, impulsive, too exacting, perhaps, but she showed these qualities in such a way as only to make me love her more.

I liked to see her turn away in indignant scorn, when I had given utterance to some sentiment she deemed unworthy. And then, when I repented and sought her forgiveness, it was a delight to see the fire die out of her eyes, and the tender light come back to them, and to watch that rare smile relax the lips just now pressed together in anger. She was extremely independent. No one ever cared less than she for what Mrs. Grundy might say. Perhaps it was the grand natural scenery about her home that had developed this leading trait in her character. The

society of mountains and forests helps to make the soul free and strong. She was motherless, too, and although always carefully taught, her position as mistress of her father's household at that susceptible season verging upon womanhood, had doubtless encouraged habits of independent thought. It had given her a maturity transcending her years, but this was beautifully relieved by her simplicity and a childlike freshness of sensibility. There was withal, an occasional shyness about her that removed her beyond my sphere. I scarcely dared hope for her love; sometimes I even doubted her friendship. She was like a bird, that with a sweet reluctance approaches close to you, and just as you think you are sure of him, he is beyond your reach.

It is now later in the autumn. The glory of the Indian summer has passed away from the earth, the trees have given up their brilliant garniture, and the dry leaves lie thick upon the ground. Alice and I are sitting at the foot of an oak-tree, which terminates one of the pleasant forest-paths in the vicinity of her home. A brook wanders along close by, and its low singing, the rustle of the leaves, and the loud caw of the lonely crow, are all the sounds that interrupt our talk. A few late asters are growing at her feet, and Alice is carelessly playing with the starry blooms. There has been a silence, which is broken by Alice.

"Did you ever think that women are like flowers?" she said. "There is little Mrs. Lewis—you know how bright and gay she is; but she has had a world of trouble and sorrow. Every one thought when her last child died, that she would never be herself again. Yet she seems to enjoy what there is pleasant in her autumn-like life, just as these cheerful-looking flowers do the November sunshine. She always reminds me of the asters."

"It is a pretty fancy," I replied. "What is Delia like—a honeysuckle, clinging to something strong for support?"

Alice looked grave for a moment, and then answered very quietly, "No."

"No—indeed?" I returned, surprised. "What then?"

Alice was silent. I had seen that she did not esteem Delia, but she never alluded to her faults.

"Will you tell me what you resemble, Alice?"

She laughed and blushed. "Papa says I am like sweet-brier."

I do not know how it came to pass. I had steadfastly resolved that I would return to the city and prove my affection by a long waiting, before I revealed to Alice the hopes which had be-

come so dear to me. But somehow the secret escaped my lips, and a few words told her all. She did not turn timidly away from me—it piqued my foolish vanity, I remember, to see that she was not even surprised. She listened in silence, and when she spoke the clear tones came forth unflatteringly.

"I am sorry you told me this, Philip, because it grieves me to cause you even a moment's mortification. I am sorry you should associate me with anything that may pain you ever so slightly. You would have remembered me as a pleasant companion, and though you will not love me long, we might still have been friends."

I interrupted her. "Do you doubt my sincerity?"

"No, Philip, I believe you are in earnest. If I should give you now the affection you ask me for, you would try to conceal from me the change that will take place in your feelings, and you would keep your pledge."

"How could she talk to me so?" I asked.

"What had she seen in me to make her think me so fickle? I loved her truly. I was sure I should love her always."

She shook her head and smiled a little sadly.

"You do not love me *enough*. Do you know how exacting I am? Do you know what constancy and fervor I should demand? I have never loved many people. My nature is slow to respond to affection. Love is a growth with me, not the inspiration of a moment. But all my life I have known how I *could* love. There would be no wavering or shadow of change in me. And you ask me to give all this to you—who do not even understand me."

I tried to convince her that I, too, could be true. I asked her if she could be indifferent to an affection as deep as it was fervent—that should anticipate every thought, that should lie in wait for the slightest word of the beloved.

"Your theory is beautiful, Philip, but I have no faith in your practice."

"Only give me time to prove my devotion. You would learn to love me, Alice."

"Very likely I might," she answered, shortly.

I sat down on the turf at her feet. "Give me some hope, Alice."

"I must not love you, Philip. I must put far away from me all thought of it." She stopped a moment, then went on hastily. "We are not suited to each other. You are ambitious, you seek worldly renown. I ask only love. You are eager for popular fame. I do not care for applause. You have studied, and I have dreamed. Do not seek to awaken me from my dream."

"Alice, you are more precious to me than any renown I can win. Your love would give a sweetness to every triumph," I said, impetuously.

She drew her hand resolutely away.

"You are mistaken in yourself. You prize intellect above affection. You will never love as you *can* love, until you have tried fame and seen how unsatisfactory it is. You will never value constancy as you ought, until you have known faithlessness."

"Alice," I exclaimed, almost bitterly, "you are cold and hard."

I remember how her eyes kindled. I recall the impetuous movement with which she flung away the asters and clasped her small white hands together.

"You know I am not, Philip," she said, passionately, "but you do not know, you cannot appreciate such a love as I could give you. You would misunderstand and weary of me, and it would break my heart."

I had been unjust, I knew. I began to get a fuller look at the treasure I could not gain. I was silent a moment. She put out her hand.

"Do not let us quarrel any more," she said, her eyes filling with tears. "We have been very happy together."

Ah, if I had but understood her then!

I am on my way to the city. A bleak storm darkens the air, and a tempest of baffled affection and wounded pride is raging in my heart. Delia is beside me. She takes advantage of my escort to make a journey to town. I can scarcely find any pleasant words to say to her. Her very gentleness exasperates me. I gaze out of the car-window in moody silence. I am only alive to one feeling.

Now, my longing to enter upon active life was gratified. It was not hard for me to throw myself into my work with an intensity that left no room for any fruitless regrets, or vain aspirations. I strove to forget Alice. I believe I was proud to prove myself as fickle as she had foreboded. I said I would not again sue for preferment at the court of love. I crushed down my heart, and kept my mind hard at work. I found pleasure in the exciting contests in which I engaged with all the ardor of a novice. I had a keen relish for intellectual sparring. I liked, too, to hunt up obscure points in support of my position. In a word, I had found my niche, and for a while was satisfied with my labor and its results. I was willing now to admit that Alice might have been right in saying that we were unsuited to each other. Perhaps I could not have withdrawn from my professional cares enough to have re-

sponded to such a nature as hers. I realized now that congenial as were our tastes, there was a broader ground of sentiment and feeling, where we might not always have stood together. Sympathetic as she had been, well as she had understood me, I know I had never fathomed her. It was best that she had seen the matter in the light of cool common sense. At first, I said this bitterly. Afterward the thought lost its sharpness, and I said it sincerely. Do not think I had no stability of character. I was at a period of life when everything is transient. The emotions of youth are like the waves of the ever-restless sea—maturity is the quiet inlet unvisited by storms, serene and deep.

It is no new thing to speak of the unsatisfactoriness of success. It is but a repetition of the sentiment of the Preacher—"vanity of vanities." No one ever towered above his fellows but to find a colder atmosphere, a more ungenial clime. I only reached, in my progress, the same unwelcome goal which every other eager aspirant for fame has attained. I grew at last weary of the rude encounter with those as ambitious of distinction as myself. I tasted the satiety of success, and popular applause became hateful to me. There came a time when I did justice to the worth of affection. I learned that of all things in the universe love is the greatest and best. I use the word in its widest signification. I longed now to escape from my restless, troubled life, and thirsted for repose, and for those tender ties that should make that repose sweet.

All this was not the work of a brief space. Years had passed since in that drear November day I turned away from Alice's home and hurried swiftly toward the theatre of my ambitious exertions.

Delia was now a resident in town. With her beauty and ample fortune, she found the gayeties of the city more attractive than the quiet enjoyments of country life. I often met her in society. Her manner was always the same to me—gentle and kind, and touched by a slight familiarity that proved she remembered our old acquaintance. Some business affairs brought me into intimate relations with the family where she made her home. I was lonely, eager for real companionship and the delights of a home, and I found the pleasant domestic circle of the Sandfords very attractive. The intercourse which the household maintained with society did not destroy its repose. It was exactly calculated to tempt my weary spirit. I began now to wonder that I had so easily overlooked Delia's charms. I had acknowledged her personal loveliness, but I believed I had not appreciated her vivacity, her gentleness

and good temper. I observed indeed, the absence of intellectual superiority, but I did not miss it. In truth, in my present mood, I think this very want made her seem more lovable to me. I was prepared to be enchanted with goodness and amiability, and could very well dispense with intellect. After a day's work among musty folios, I liked to sit in the sunshine of her presence, to watch the color come and go in her transparent cheek, and to listen to the ripply flow of her graceful talk.

"What is it to-night, *ma chere petite ami*?" I said, as just at dusk one winter's evening I entered the drawing-room of the Sandfords. "Is it for party, opera or play, that I have the honor to proffer my escort?"

Delia was nestled in one corner of the sofa, and with the freedom of intimate friendship I ensconced myself in the other. She shook back her curls, and replied, in her playful, winning way:

"We are not in need of your valiant courtesy, Sir Knight. We don't propose adorning either with our presence. We prefer a quiet evening at home, so please you."

She looked very beautiful as she sat there in the twilight, the delicate contour of her face taking a yet more ethereal loveliness, and the exquisite fairness of her round white arms contrasting with the soft crimson of the robe whose folds swept so gracefully about her. When I left Delia that night it was as her betrothed lover.

And now the great want of my life existed no longer. The tranquil happiness I had sighed for was within my reach. The home for which I had longed, made beautiful by the tender ministries of love, was no more a dream, but a prospective reality. Enriched by the affection of one so gentle and lovely, what more could I desire? Why was it, that as the months rolled by, the turrets and pinnacles of the castle I had built for myself, the fair structure that sprang so proudly into the blue sky, and caught the sunlight on its many spires, dropped away one by one, despoiling the edifice of its beautiful proportions, till even the foundations crumbled, and only an unsightly ruin remained? It was not that the remembrance of Alice now came to haunt me. The thought of her was laid up in my memory, as one puts away a bunch of withered violets—a faint odor lingers around them yet, but their fragrance and beauty are fled.

"I received a letter from Judge Morgan to-day," said Delia to me, once. "It appears that Alice is to become Mrs. Dr. May."

"Indeed!" I said carelessly.

"Do you know," continued Delia, laughing,

"I once thought you had a *penchant* for Alice. Tell me, was it really so?"

I put her off with light words, and shut more closely the secret chamber where the memory of my first love lay hidden.

No, it was not any thought of Alice that unsealed my eyes to the unloveliness of Delia's character. It was not the remembrance of her earnestness, her truth, her constancy, that revealed to me the frivolity, the insincerity, the fickleness which I now found in Delia. It was not because I recalled the look I had into Alice's deep and loving heart, that I grew dissatisfied with the superficiality which Delia now daily betrayed. Those qualities must have repelled me, had I never known their opposites. The discovery thrilled me with inexpressible pain. It was as if the beautiful drapery which has been supposed to enshroud an exquisite statue, upon being removed, should disclose a hideous skeleton. I wilfully shut my eyes to the truth.

"These are venial faults," I said. "She is very young, I will mould her."

But this was not very easy. With a singular fickleness in matters pertaining to the conscience and affections, she was inflexibly pertinacious in her own fancies and opinions. Hers was no wax-like character; no clinging, dependent vine was Delia. She grew capricious—I was indifferent. She tried to excite my jealousy—her shallow acts only awoke my contempt. Then she became weary of me. I saw it, and the sting inflicted by faithlessness was not the less sharp, that I saw the idol to be clay. From being tiresome, I became disagreeable to her, and yet I waited for her to cast me off. It came. I was grateful to her for having spared me the pain of pulling down my palace with my own hands. I did not think she had played the hypocrite intentionally. She had loved me to the extent of her narrow capacity, but it was a poor, flickering flame that soon died out—not the star that beams on through night and storm with quenchless light.

I went back to my work, humbled in my own estimation for having cherished this pale shadow of a passion, for having stooped to love unworthily. I tried to think that happiness is not the end of life, and I labored to grasp its right meaning. The soul is always made strong by noble endeavor, though it may not fully attain its object, and so I, too, found peace at length. Sometimes the thought of Alice floated across my mind, as, to the mariner sailing shoreward over the wide sea—waste, worn by tempests and homesick for rest, come the songs of birds and the sweet fragrance of fields and flowers.

Three times the splendor of the Indian summer had shone over the mountains, the woodlands and the lake, since the sad waking from my last wild dream, when I again turned my face in the direction of Judge Morgan's residence. From time to time some slight news of my old friend had come to me. I had learned that he was gradually sinking under the repeated attacks of a disease which must ultimately prove fatal. I knew, too, that Alice watched over him. They had not failed to praise her tireless devotion, her saintly patience, and they spoke, too, of Dr. May, the physician who had attended the invalid through all the fluctuations of his malady, the efficient friend and counsellor, and the lover, who as yet forbore to press the claim which was not denied. The judge had desired my services to arrange some business which had become complicated by long neglect. I looked again on the same beautiful scenery, the magnificent blending of the autumn colors, the blue mist veiling its splendor, the same serene, perfect beauty which filled my soul in the olden time—but how was I changed!

"The youth embarks upon the ocean with a thousand sails,
Sadly the old man drifts to port on a boat saved from
the wreck,"

says Schiller. I had sailed far enough over the sea of life to know how rough and fierce its waves were.

I found Alice scarcely changed. The piquant freshness of manner that had so charmed me in the olden time, was a little subdued, but there was the same proud carriage of the head, the same deep, tender eyes, and, though the rare smile was a little sadder than of old, it had lost none of its sweetness. She was very kind to me, and we were soon upon the old intimate terms. Daily I met Dr. May at the bedside of the invalid. I saw that he had an earnest purpose, and a strong, bold heart. He was a man who might well have won the love of such a woman as Alice Morgan. That he was dear to her I knew at once. She could not help loving him, I thought. I knew now the full value of the treasure I had lost. If I had but been worthy of her—if I had understood her that morning when we sat together in the oakwood.

Judge Morgan was grateful for my coming. I endeavored to hasten the completion of the visit which brought me there, for I was warned by the anxiety and sorrow in Dr. May's face, that the end was not very far off.

At midnight there was a hurried passing to and fro in the house. I was in Judge Morgan's room in a moment. Alice was leaning over her father. One glance at the sick man, and I saw

that the mysterious change had come over his face that forebodes the speedy coming of the death angel. Alice saw it too. I shall never forget the agony which was in the eyes that looked up to mine.

It was over, and the terrible season that comes to all sometime in life, when the loved one is carried away from our sight, and we have again to take up the burden of living, while the sense of loss is still fresh and sore, came now to Alice. There was no bitterness in her grief, but as day after day she reclined on the sofa in the parlor, and submitted to be petted and taken care of—for she was very weak and worn—the frequent quivering of the lips, and the low, half-suppressed sigh, told how deep was her sorrow. I had never loved her so well as now—had never known anything like the strong, tender, unselfish affection which I now felt, and I knew that its fire would burn on until my heart itself became dust.

During Dr. May's long and frequent calls I withdrew to the library, and busied myself among deeds of settlement and the various testamentary documents which my appointment as executor had put into my hands, consoled somewhat by thinking it was all for her. It was now almost enough to love her. I could almost yield her to another—almost—but there were times, when looking into her loving eyes, and hearing her sweet "thank you," for some trifling service, it was hard not to clasp her in my arms and tell her what she was to me.

There was no excuse for lingering now. It was best that I should go before the pain of doing so became too bitter.

"Alice," I said, abruptly, one night, "I am going away to-morrow."

She dropped the light work she had been holding and looked at me. I could not bear the look, and I rose and walked away to the window.

"Yes, Alice, I am going away to-morrow. I dare not stay here any longer. Years ago, Alice, when you refused my love and sent me away from you, I thought you were cold and unjust, but you were right in your judgment of me. I confess it with shame and sorrow. You knew me better than I knew myself." I went back, stood by her side, took both her hands and looked down into her face. "I did not understand you then, Alice, but I loved you; yet not as I do now. I was not good enough for you, dear. But if I ever do anything that shall make the world better, I shall owe it to you. I shall have more faith in the worth of women always for your sake. You have taught me how unselfish

love can be. Can I put the lesson to a better use, than to go away now and give you up patiently to one who deserves you more than I?"

I held her hands close for one moment, and then I turned away. I had reached the door. She put out her hand with an eager movement:

"Philip!"

O, the love and tenderness in that low, tremulous tone! Every nerve in my body thrilled at that call, and there was such a strange, rushing sound in my ears that I almost lost the whispered words I bent to hear.

"I have never loved any one but you, Philip."

"Alice! Alice! I was untrue to you. Can you love—can you trust me?"

"I love you, and can trust you now."

I held my darling in my arms at last, and kissed away the tears from her glowing cheeks. And I did not go away the next day, after all, for we were very, very happy.

THE SHADOWS WE CAST.

In this great world of sunshine and shadow, we are constantly casting shadows on those around us, and receiving shadows from them in return. There is no pathway in life which is not sometimes in the shade, and there is no one who walks over these paths, it matters not which way they tend, who does not, now and then, cast his shadow with the rest. How often do we, by a mere thoughtless word or careless act, cast a shadow on some heart which is longing for sunlight. How often does the husband, by a cold greeting, cast a gloom over the happy, trusting face of his young wife, who, it may be, has waited anxiously for the first sound of his footsteps to give a joyous welcome to his home. How often has the parent, by a harsh reproof, chilled the over-flowing spring of confidence and love which is bubbling up from the fountains of the heart of the innocent prattler at his knee. How often are the bright rays of hope torn from the clinging grasp of the souls of those worn out by poverty and the never-ending conflict of life, by the stinging ridicule or the sordid avarice of those whom the world honors—ay, loves to honor. How often does the child—even after it has grown to the full bloom of manhood, and is clad in garments of strength and beauty—bring sorrow to the parent already tottering on the brink of eternity. Then beware, lest you cast a deeper shadow over those which are already darkening his happiness. The shadows we cast—can we escape them? Can we look back, as we walk on in life's journey, and see no shadowy marks about our footprints?—*Home Monthly.*

HOLY FAMILY.

O child of beauty rare!
O mother chaste and fair!
How happy seem they both, so far beyond compare!
She, in her infant blest,
And he in conscious rest,
Nestling within the soft warm cradle of her breast!
What joy that sight might bear
To him who sees him there,
If, with a pure and guilt-untroubled eye,
He looked upon the twain, like Joseph standing by.
GOSSET.

(ORIGINAL.)

A TIME FOR EVERYTHING.

BY WILLIE WARE.

There is a time to laugh,
There is a time to sing;
There is a time to soar away
On fancy's painted wing.

There is a time to mourn,
There is a time to weep;
There is a time to dance,
And glittering pleasures seek.

There is a time to toil,
There is a time to rest;
There is a time for everything
That is for us the best.

There is a time for sleep,
There is a time for prayer—
When we may thank the Lord
For kind and watchful care.

There is a time to love,
And time that love to tell;
There is a time to whisper
The parting, sad farewell.

There is a time to meet
The loved ones gone before,
When we shall pass death's stream,
And reach the heavenly shore.

(ORIGINAL.)

THE RECLAIMED.

A STORY OF REAL LIFE.

BY A NEW CONTRIBUTOR.

THE reader who, with Byron, "likes to be particular in dates," can consult the file of the London Times in the Boston Athenæum, if he desires to ascertain the exact date of the first performance of "Benedict" by Macready.

After witnessing that performance I walked towards home, talking with a friend of the excellencies of the witching Mrs. Waylett as "Beatrice," and measuring and comparing the mimic scenes of the drama with their actual prototypes in real life. Near the Bank I parted with my companion, whose residence was in Finsbury Square, and I crossed London Bridge alone.

The clock of "St. George's in the East," struck one as I passed on the other side of the street, and as my head was turned looking across the road, and up at the church tower, I was suddenly accosted by a female who, stepping before me, asked me if I would tell her the way to London Bridge.

Her voice was filled with melody, and as the

light of the gas lamp behind me streamed full upon her countenance, the extraordinary loveliness of her features and complexion almost startled me, and I did not immediately reply to her question. The girl—she was quite a girl, and little more than a child—observed my surprise, and throwing back her graceful head, and, shaking her golden tresses, her white teeth absolutely sparkling in the gaslight as she laughed, she said:

"Do you think me pretty? Would you like me for a sweetheart?" And at the same time she quickly came towards me, and adroitly placed her hand upon my waist.

Every doubt as to her character at once vanished, and I stepped aside and endeavored to pass on. The girl nimbly kept her place before me. I felt her fingers in my waistcoat pocket, and I caught her wrist. She uttered a sharp, low, plaintive sound. It was not the whistle of a man, nor the scream of a bird, nor the cry of any animal. It was a clear, ringing tone, that would be heard in the thunder of a tempest, the roar of a waterfall, or the rumbling of all the wagons in London. I knew it. It was the call of the London female pickpocket to her male confederate. In the stillness of the night it reverberated from side to side, and from roof to basement of every house, along the four roads that met each other at St. George's church.

I saw that my watch was in the girl's hand. In the short instant that she had delayed me, she had separated the watch from the chain that held it. If she had been dexterous in her profession, she would have taken the watch from my pocket without exciting my suspicion, and without disturbing the watch-guard. I perceived that she was only a beginner at the trade of "naming and foisting."

Some minutes are occupied in the description of thoughts that do not fill a second. The imagination of the reader must measure the actual time. I remembered that I was near the dwellings of the worst characters in London. In the alleys and courts and dens of Kent Street on one side of the road, and Mint Street on the other, the refuse of the dregs of the population of modern Babylon have their miserable homes. Then close to the great thoroughfares, one of the main arteries to the great heart of commerce, through which Kent and Surrey and Sussex pour their traffic and their trade, here is the modern "Alsatia" of London; and here, driven from Rastcliffe Highway, by the construction of the Blackwall Railway, and from the "Slums" of St. Giles, by the improvements in New Oxford Street; here—the modern Ishmaelites whose hand

is against every man, and every man's hand against them—here herd like wolves.

There was no policeman near, and I perceived that I must either lose my watch or enter into a personal conflict. Still holding the girl's wrist, I drew a pistol from the breast pocket of my coat, and watched for the approach of the pick-pocket's confederate. I had not to wait long. If I had been superstitious, I should have fancied that an evil spirit had sprung from the ground, as a tall, large man, mysteriously and suddenly started up before me. The wall of houses on my right hand did not appear to offer any opening from which he could have emerged. And yet it was certain that from that wall of houses he must have come. Doors and window-shutters were there in the long regularity of respectability, that marks a rich street in a populous city; yet I felt assured that in that long row of respectability, there must be some opening for rascality; and even whilst I was waiting and watching for the expected assault, I wondered whence the attacker could have so suddenly precipitated himself. I had walked by daylight many hundred times along that great public thoroughfare, yet I had never observed any lane, alley or opening from the main street near where I was standing. There was no appearance of poverty in the apparel of the man, or in that of the girl. Both were well dressed, and with a neatness that had nothing of the "flash" or the "swell." And as my glance travelled rapidly from one to the other, I called to mind many stories of gentle highwaymen and illustrious pickpockets.

But in the immeasurably short instant that sufficed for what has taken some time to narrate, I observed a pale and scarcely perceptible gleam of light, only a little less dark than the high walls of the houses on my right hand, that evidently marked a doorway, and I formed a conclusion that the man was employed in one of the large warehouses or stores. This idea lessened my dread of a desperate attack.

Retaining the girl's wrist firmly in the grasp of my left hand, I jerked her sharply to one side and stepped forward towards the man, who, surprised at seeing his confederate detained, hesitated and drew back. My advance placed me opposite the opening to which I have referred, and I then perceived that it was a long, low, narrow, and covered passage, on a level with the shops, and under the first floor of one of the houses; and that it led into a labyrinth of wretchedness, known as "The Den."

The disagreeable reflection caused by this discovery was interrupted by the man, who brand-

ished a short bludgeon, as he exclaimed with a great oath:

"Now, then, young man, what do you want with that young woman?"

I held the girl fast in my grasp, and kept her at arm's length, as I raised my pistol to a level with the man's breast, and drew back the hammer with my thumb. The click of the tumbler of the lock sounded sharp and clear, and the girl exclaimed:

"O, do not fire here, sir! Take your watch, and let us go."

The man not expecting and not prepared for such a resistance, threw up his hand, as men do to defend the face, and in the sudden movement knocked off his hat. As he was facing the street lamp, which was behind me, I saw his features plainly, whilst mine were concealed in the shade from him. I recognized a man who only two years before had been my fellow-student at Oxford, and I exclaimed in astonishment and sorrow: "Henry Sterling!"

At this instant, the iron heel of a policeman, stamping with a slow and equal pace upon the stone flags of the pavement, was heard approaching. I uncocked my pistol, returned it to my pocket, and dropped the wrist of the girl, who quietly returned my watch to me. Neither of us spoke, until the policeman, turning the shade of his bull's-eye lantern, which was strapped to his waist, threw the glare of its bright light upon each of our faces alternately. He said "good-night," walked on a few steps, stopped, and drew himself up in the attitude of a soldier at "attention."

"This is very dreadful, Sterling," I said.

"Hush," he replied, "here comes the police relief, let them go by, and I will speak to you."

The sergeant's party of police approached in single file. The policeman was relieved by another, and the party marched on. As they were passing by Henry Sterling, a man in plain clothes who accompanied them, stepped sharply up to him, caught him by the collar, and said:

"Hulloa, Nimble Ned, you're wanted."

"Halt," the sergeant exclaimed, and the police stopped.

"What's up now?" said Henry Sterling.

The man in plain clothes answered, "We have nibbed Springheeled Jack—he has split. You have had a short run, but it has been a merry one. Your time's up."

"The dence it is! Well, what can't be cured must be endured. He who lies down with dogs, gets up with fleas. Come and see me in the jug, sissy, will you? Good night, Mr. Jones. I always said that I would see the world, and now

my grateful and considerate country will pay the expenses of my voyage to the antipodes. I suppose it's a case of New South Wales, eh, sergeant?"

Whilst Henry Sterling, known to the police as Nimble Ned, was speaking, a policeman had slipped handcuffs on to his wrists. There was no fuss on one side, and no resistance upon the other. The policeman was quiet, and Henry Sterling was unruffled. At a sign from the sergeant, two policemen put each an arm under the arm of Henry Sterling, the word, "Quick march," was given, and the police marched away with their prisoner. The girl and I were left together.

"You are very young; do you like the life you are leading?" I said.

"Ah, no, you would pity me if you knew my story. And perhaps—yes, I think, O, yes, I am sure—that if you can you will help me. My home is in the direction that you are going. If you will let me, O, do!—do let me walk by your side, and tell you my short history?"

The girl's large, dark blue eyes were filled with tears, and she clasped her hands together in earnest entreaty.

"Come, then, poor wanderer from virtue, and may Heaven bless my efforts, and enable me to save you. I will hear your story."

Side by side we walked together towards Kennington.

"Tell me your name?"

"Isabel Ranson. Do you know Northampton?"

"No, I have not been in that part of England."

"There is a great trade in shoes, and many hundred hands are employed at work for the London market. But very low wages are given, and the people there, as in other parts of England, look to London as the great pay office, where good wages are always to be obtained. Country girls now-a-days know very well that London is not paved with gold, but they believe that gold is to be gained by the same labor that in the country brings in only coppers. The wish of every country drudge is that she may see London. Do you understand?"

"Perfectly. Go on."

"So that when a woman—her name is Offal—came to our village to engage shoe-binders, she easily induced half a dozen of the prettiest girls—alas, I know that I am pretty!—to accept her offers. I, with others, came to London; with them I was deceived, betrayed and ruined. Mrs. Offal did not want us for shoe-binders! Do you understand?"

"Yes, my poor girl, I understand too well. But were not you yourself to blame?"

"I was, I was, and Mrs. Offal defends herself by telling me that all I have done, I have done willingly. Alas, sir! like a man who willingly starts to run down a steep hill, I am now unable to check my headlong descent. O, help me, sir! Stay me, do not let me tumble into the horrible abyss of shame and guilt and misery, that I see yawning before me. Help me, sir! I am young, not eighteen, only just seventeen, sir. Sir, can I not be saved? I would be honest."

"Why do you not return home? A parent's love can never die. Affection bursts the chains of anger. Upon a mother's breast, and in a father's arms, the tears of a repentant child fall like dew upon a fading flower. Why do you not return home?"

The girl drew herself up proudly and stopped.

"Sir, I am too proud! Flaunting and boastful I left home, full of hope for myself, and of scorn for my less enterprising companions of the village. How can I return there? I had better die! Heaven has mercy, when earth gives only punishment. What can such a wretch as I have to do in the virtuous village of my father? How can I look into the faces of my little sisters, who have knelt and learned their prayers from me? No, sir, I will return successful, or I will die unrecognized, if not unremembered!"

"Poor girl, poor girl! Such is human nature—proud and humble, weak and strong! And where is Mrs. Offal?"

"I am lodging with her. O, she is very respectable!" The girl's lip curled in mockery. "O, she is very respectable! She has a respectable lodging house, and her lodgers pay their rent regularly, or else she takes their clothes, and then there are the streets, and the unions, and the jails! Do you understand? I owe her rent, and if it is not paid to-morrow, she will take all I have, and then I—I—I—"

Isabel clasped her hands upon her forehead, and cried:

"O, sir, help me! You do not look at me as other men look at me. You do not think me lost? Not altogether lost? I am not left without hope, am I? Ah, I am very young. I may yet save myself. Again an honest girl I may look into my father's face, and lay my head upon my mother's breast, and then I will weep and they will welcome me."

I took her hand in mine, and between mine I held them up to heaven, and there in the open street, I, a Christian clergyman, and she a night-walker, as our tears fell together, prayed to him who never turned away an earnest prayer. We walked on in silence, until at the corner of a street, Isabel said:

"Here is Mrs. Offal's, it is No. 30 in this street."

"Can I see her?"

"Have you money? I do not know anything that money cannot do in London."

"Good-night! I will be at Mrs. Offal's at 10 o'clock to-morrow."

Isabel Ranson took a situation as housemaid in a gentleman's family. Mrs. Offal gave her a character! Four years passed. I travelled in many countries, but although I often thought of Isabel Ranson, I did not hear of her.

Four years after I had met her opposite St. George's church, I was staying at the Royal Hotel, Plymouth, during a contested election. The town was in great excitement, and frequent street fights occurred between the supporters of the rival candidates. It was said that prize-fighters were brought from London, and many of the worst characters of the metropolis took an active part in the proceedings.

One day one of the waiters told me that a servant in livery wished to deliver a note to me. The servant came into my room, and said that his mistress, Lady Underwood, requested an answer to the note which he had given me. I read the note:

"Lady Underwood presents her compliments to the Rev. Josiah Jones, and requests an interview at Mr. Jones's earliest convenience. Immediately, if possible."

"And pray," said I, "who is Lady Underwood?"

"The widow of General Sir George Underwood, who died nearly a year ago."

I accompanied the servant. A handsome carriage with a splendid pair of horses waited for me. I was taken to a large house, and was shown into a beautifully-furnished drawing-room. Presently a lady in black, but not in a widow's cap, entered the apartment. She was so beautiful that I could have fallen at her feet, as at the realization of a long dream of female loveliness.

"Isabel Ranson!" I exclaimed.

Isabel came to me, took my hand in hers, raised it to her lips, kissed it, and as she sat down on a footstool beside me, murmured, as a tear fell on my hand:

"My preserver and my friend!"

Reader, Isabel was not twenty-two years old, and I was not more than thirty. Was not this recognition pleasant? Heaven knows that I do not expect gratitude. When I perform a good action I do it because it is my duty, and because it affords me pleasure. I do not sell kindness for a price. I give it, a free gift, to be registered, if

at all, not in the debtor and creditor account of this world, but in the record of human frailty and the register of forgiveness in another. Let a man once feel the tear of another's gratitude on his cheek, or upon his hand, and he will never do an unkind act again.

Isabel Ranson was Lady Underwood. Old General Underwood had fallen in love with his pretty housemaid. Isabel was prudent, and the old general had married her. The world calls this an honorable match, the church sanctions it, the law allows it, and if—O, that *if*—if the conditions of the contract are fulfilled, Heaven ratifies it. During the six months that she had been a wife, Isabel did perform her part of the contract, and when the old general died, he left her his fortune.

"And now," said Isabel, throwing herself into a large arm-chair, "now I must tell you why I sent for you. Do you remember Henry Sterling—Nimble Ned?"

"Of course I do."

"He is in Plymouth. He was sentenced to three years' penal servitude. He has served his time. He has recognized me, and he insists that I shall marry him."

"And do you love him?"

"Love him? Ah, no! To him I owe the degradation from which you rescued me. I never loved him. He betrayed me treacherously, and deceived me devilishly. How can I do otherwise than hate him?"

"Then do not marry him."

"He threatens me."

"Hand him over to the police."

Isabel drew a long sigh, and after a few moments' silence, she rose from her chair, and said:

"I will follow your advice. Come, have some luncheon. Do you admire my taste in furniture?"

And then her white and perfect tapering fingers, loaded with jewels, rested upon my arm. I felt flushed, heady, and bewildered, as I was led along that magnificent drawing-room by Isabel, the night-walker of St. George's in the East.

That evening I had an engagement at the Yacht Club, and I walked round by the lime-stone quarries. The moon was near the full, but dark masses of clouds floated heavily in the heavens, and threw their gloomy shadows upon the rocks and stones that lay irregularly in heaps about the quarries. The beauties of the scenery were obscured in gloom, and my own feelings took a melancholy tone from the sombre night, as I mused over the chances against the happiness of Isabel, Lady Underwood.

My reveries were interrupted by a sharp cry—I remembered it—it was the call of the female pickpocket to her confederate, and I looked round with that sort of sweet titillation of ill-natured pleasure that one feels at seeing another suffer the ills that one has one's-self undergone. The cry was repeated, and was followed by a call for help, in a woman's voice.

Gazing steadily in the direction of the sound, I perceived two figures near the edge of the limestone quarries; and there was sufficient light for me to distinguish that there were a man and a woman struggling together.

I ran forward, and before the man was aware of my approach, I seized him by the throat, and got my knuckles between his neck-handkerchief and neck, and under his ear. The man turned his face towards me at the instant that the clouds passed from before the moon, and I was again face to face with Henry Sterling.

He instantly grappled me, and with a furious oath wrenched himself clear of his neck-handkerchief, which came off his throat and remained in my hand. Henry Sterling was a larger and a stronger man than I.

"Always my evil genius, Jones!" he exclaimed, again swearing. "Always my evil genius, and an omen of disappointment. Ha, ha, my fine fellow, to-night shall settle our account, and wipe out a long score. You shall not leave this place alive."

We were near the brink of the quarry, which was cut away some eighty feet perpendicularly. Towards this terrific precipice he tried to drag me. Inch by inch and foot by foot I perceived that I was approaching a dreadful death. I did not dare expend my breath by screaming, and I doggedly and in silence resisted his fierce endeavors to destroy me. He had dragged me within five feet of the brink. Then with his strong arms round me, he lifted me and threw me from him. I fell with my head over the edge of limestone, and in an instant his knee was upon my chest, and his long fingers round my throat. My eyes were starting from their sockets, my temples were bursting, respiration was suspended, and I looked up into the bright, clear moon, as I believed, for the last time. An opaque substance passed before it, and crashed on Henry Sterling's head. His hand relaxed its hold upon my throat, he fell forward over the brink of the quarry, threw out his long arms, slipped down, and dropped heavily upon the rocks below me. A soft hand grasped mine, and with the assistance of Lady Underwood, I raised myself from my perilous situation.

Then Isabel told me that, anxious to avoid a

public scandal, she had given Henry Sterling a private meeting, in the hope that she could induce him to leave the country. But Sterling, maddened by drink, had rudely assaulted her, and Lady Underwood had saved my life by hurling the mass of limestone that had killed Henry Sterling.

The next day the body was found, and a coroner's inquest brought in a verdict of accidental death, supposing that Sterling had fallen into the quarry. It has been said that

"Every fault a tear may claim,
Except an erring sister's shame."

But Isabel, no longer young, yet in the full ripeness of womanly beauty, with a heart softened by a grateful recollection of her own revival to virtue, exercises an honest benevolence towards her fallen but not altogether guilt-crushed fellow-creatures.

THE CALIFORNIA VINEGAR PLANT.

Dr. E. J. Coxé has favored us with a bottle of beverage tasting like spruce beer, made from a plant handed him by a lady from Texas, and originally from California, where it is known as the "vinegar plant." By mixing a certain quantity of water and molasses, or golden syrup with a small portion of the plant, in a bottle well corked, in a few hours the beverage above-mentioned is produced. Allowed to sour, it becomes good vinegar. Its strangest quality, however, is that it feeds on the syrup and water, and grows with such rapidity as to furnish an inexhaustible supply. Dr. Coxé informs us that from the small portion of the plant handed him only a few weeks ago, thousands of bottles of this delightful beverage have been made and used in many families, and still the plant grows on its simple food in such quantity as to furnish all who wish for it. Dr. Coxé says it is harmless and possesses no intoxicating qualities. We tasted the beverage last night; and if not otherwise informed, would have thought we were sipping the ordinary spruce beer familiar to every one.—*New Orleans Picayune.*

DIAMONDS.

Diamonds are not used exclusively as articles of ornament or luxury. They are frequently employed with great advantage in the arts. Bad, discolored diamonds are sold to break into powder, and are said to have a more extensive sale than brilliants, with all their captivating beauty. In many operations of art they are indispensable. The fine cameo and intaglio owe their perfection to the diamond, with which alone they can be engraved. The beauty of the onyx would yet remain dormant, had not the unrivalled power of the diamond been called forth to the artist's assistance. The cornelian, the agate or cairngorm cannot be engraved by any other substance. Every crest or letter cut upon hard stone is indebted to the diamond.—*Scientific American.*

MEMORY.

Memory watches o'er the sad review
Of joys that faded like the morning dew.—*CAMPBELL.*

[ORIGINAL.]

AFAR ON THE SEA!

BY M. T. CALDON.

Afar on the sea—O, afar on the sea,
There's a ship that is speeding away from me!
Around it the foam-wreathing billows arise,
And above it are bending these same blue skies;
But the sun that looks faint on our snow-clad hills,
Shines bright on the sail that the monsoon fills.

Afar on the sea—O, afar on the sea,
A heart there is yearning and sighing for me;
A form on the deck borne along by the tide,
For aye, on this earth, should be here at my side.
O Wind of the West, hasten on and bestow
This kiss to the brow, whose caress it will know!

Afar on the sea—O, afar on the sea,
Where perils arise, and where shipwreck may be—
O, boy in my arms, with his smile in thine eye,
Clasp thy innocent hands, as I lift to the sky
Petitions to save him—return him to shore;
The contest triumphant—no gammer no more!

[ORIGINAL.]

A STORM ON THE LAKES.

BY MARY W. JANVRAIN.

CHAPTER I.

"White as a white sail on a dusky sea,
When half the horizon's clouded and half free,
Fluttering between the dun wave and the sky,
Is Hope's last gleam in man's extremity."

THE night was dark and tempestuous. The winter wind roamed in wildest fury over land and sea—now whistling and shrieking, like a thousand fiends, over hill, through valley, and among the forests along the shores of Lake Michigan.

The lakes—those inland seas—felt the power of the gale on that winter's night. From far away, over leagues and leagues of water, it hurried on its mad career, piling up wave on wave and bearing them wildly on toward the shores; struggling in terrible might with many a gallant bark—tossing them hither and thither like the pebbles cast up on the low, rocky beach.

In the city of Chicago, the hurry and bustle of the busy day was over. The deserted streets were free to the sweep of the storm, which came with loud cries alike to the draped windows of the rich and the unsheltered casements of the poor. Within, groups gathered around blazing hearthstones; without, the glare of the street lamps cast a cold gleam on the black night. The shivering watchman was fain to seek the shelter of his box; and anon, some late home-

ward goer hastened onward, buttoning his coat collar closely about his throat, breasting the sleet that was beginning to pierce the cold wintry air.

The city clock had struck eleven, when a young man emerged from the door of a large limestone warehouse near the wharves, and, drawing his furled collar about his fate, proceeded rapidly towards his home in another quarter of the city. Threading the deserted streets, he turned into a narrower one, and, entering a court, he gained the steps of a neat brick house at its head, where his summons at the bell-pull speedily was answered, and he shook the snow from his feet in the hall.

"O, George, I am so glad you have come!" was his mother's greeting, as she opened the door of the parlor. "Do you hear anything of the schooner? You are so late, I thought she might have got in!"

"O, mother; no news yet. The despatch I received this morning stated that she had left Buffalo, and would probably be here to-night; so I waited at the wharf, in hopes she would arrive. But the storm has probably beaten her off!"

"O, my son, on the coast to-night, in this dreadful storm! And Mrs. Mallory shuddered and covered her face with her hands, while her son walked the floor of the little parlor in agitation.

"O, heaven! If Paul is on the lake to-night, in this driving northeaster, only One can save him! What do you think, my son? Your father surely knows the dangers of a gale on the lake too well to tempt its fury!" And Mrs. Mallory laid her hand appealingly on her son's arm, arresting him in his rapid walk.

"Let us not fear, mother!" he replied, calming himself by a strong effort of will, and conquering his own alarm, from regard to her fears. "Certainly, father knows the dangers of such a trip, and, I dare say, he has put back, or has managed to keep off shore. It is indeed a terrible night; but we will not borrow trouble. We shall smile at our fears to-morrow night, when, I trust, he will be with us. Calm yourself, mother!" And he drew her to a seat by the glowing grate.

The furnishing of their little parlor was simple, yet tasteful. No gilded mirrors, or costly furniture shone in the firelight; but neatness, comfort, and a certain degree of elegance prevailed. In the centre of the room stood a small table covered with books, and with a cheerful solar lamp lighting up the bright carpet and crimson curtains and a few choice engravings on the wall.

Mrs. Mallory was a lady-like and delicate woman, with traces of early beauty still visible in her face. She had married Paul Mallory when young. In her childhood, he had been her playmate; in later years, he was her protector. They had removed from the east when Chicago was still a young city; and, though he had met with many vicissitudes of fortune, yet affluence seemed likely to crown his efforts. The schooner in which he sailed, was his own vessel; and he was engaged quite largely in the transportation of lumber from the northern extremity of the lake to Buffalo for the eastern trade.

George Mallory was scarcely twenty-two, the only son of his parents. Yet his frank and manly countenance, the firm and decided curve of his lips, the keen expression of his eyes, showed that already he had matured beyond his years. And this was the case; for the cares of his mother's household, devolving upon him during his father's long absences, had given him the experience of one far older.

As the mother and son sat in silence, listening to the storm which shook the house and brought the hoarse murmur of the lake waters up to their ears, the parlor door opened, and a young and lovely girl of eighteen, clad in a wrapper, and bearing a night-lamp, glided in.

"What, Annie! up yet?" said George Mallory, rising and drawing a chair for her near the grate.

"Yes, George. I could not sleep in this storm. The thought that perhaps uncle's vessel might be on the shore, was constantly before me. You will let me join your anxious vigils?" And his young cousin and betrothed, Annie Bradley, sat down near the two watchers.

The young man's heart thrilled at this manifestation of tender feeling in the young and care-free girl; but he affected to smile at her uneasiness, and bade her seek her slumber.

"No; if you and aunt persist in watching the night through, I must be permitted to be with you. God grant that uncle's vessel is not on the lake to-night!" And she shuddered as a wild blast shook the windows and howled away down the court.

"Amen!" said Mrs. Mallory, fervently; though her pale and anxious face revealed her fears.

But few words escaped the young man's lips; but when, an hour later, he sat beside the fire, with sweet Annie's young head drooping drowsily on his shoulder—gazing thoughtfully into his mother's pale countenance—by the anxious lines about his lips and the expression of his eye, as, ever and anon, when a fiercer blast whirled

by, he raised his head to listen, might be read his solicitude for the parent who, perchance, even then, might be at the mercy of the midnight tempest. And many a fervent prayer arose from that fireside to Him who holds the seas in the hollow of his hand, to guard and guide the beloved one safely to their arms.

But still the storm raged more wildly; and the northeaster tramped like a giant over the chill waters of Lake Michigan, and hurled angry billows high up on the line of the low and marshy shore.

CHAPTER II.

"The ship works hard; the seas run high;
Their white tops, flashing through the night,
Give to the eager, straining eye
A wild and shifting light.
Hard at the pumps! the leak is gaining fast!
Lighten the ship! The devil rode that blast!"

THE day was drawing to a close, when a large and trim-built topsail schooner, with all sails set, went ~~cattering~~ across the waters of Lake Michigan. Two-thirds of the expanse had already been traversed, and she was hastening on, eager to find a port before the fierce gale from the clouds which all day had been gathering thick and dun in the sky, should burst upon her. As darkness came down and blotted out the line of the horizon, the black pall gathered thicker, and the chill northeast wind, wet with spray, came ploughing up the waters, heaping them into great billows like the waves of the ocean.

Nothing had escaped the watchful eye of the captain, as he walked the deck—now glancing up to the brooding sky, now turning his anxious gaze to the southwest, straining his vision to discern some trace of the low shore-line. Sail after sail was hoisted, fluttering out to catch the full force of the stiff wind; the masts creaked and bent; and the gullant vessel left a foaming, snowy track behind, as she clove her way through the waters.

It had been a more than ordinarily successful trip—that last which Captain Mallory had performed from Green Bay to Buffalo; and now, with the profits of his voyage, he was returning to the harbor of Chicago to lay by during the winter months, when the lake would be encased in its solid sheathing of ice. And now that his last trip of the season was made, Captain Mallory was anxious to gain port before the northeaster should break.

Night brought down the long delaying, sullen storm upon the waters. Squalls of sleet and snow struck the schooner; still she kept on her course, the captain expecting every moment to make some port.

"No land ahead?" he queried anxiously of one of the men he had sent aloft.

"No, sir. Nothing but Egyptian darkness!" was the reply.

"How is the bearing?" he cried, turning to the man at the wheel.

"West so'west, sir."

"Does she carry herself good?"

"Ay, ay, sir! good and full."

Captain Mallory paced the deck in deep thought. For a short time he revolved the chances of their safety, with the schooner driving along before such a gale.

"It will not do to drive ahead at this rate," he murmured. "We shall all go to destruction together, on some reef or island. I must alter her course. Call 'em up to shorten sail!" he shouted to the officer on deck. Then going forward, he again sought to pierce the thick darkness for the outline of land.

The cries of "Call the watch! All hands shorten sail!" rang along the deck.

While Captain Mallory still leaned over the rail, and before his orders could be executed, there came the startling cry: "Breakers ahead!"

"Where away?" rang out the captain's voice, in thunder tones.

"Dead ahead, sir!" was borne on the voice of the driving wind.

"Good heaven! this will never do!" And then, above the tempest, sounded the captain's voice through his trumpet: "Stand by to 'bout ship!"

Then followed the prompt execution of the order, as every man sprang to his station, and the heavy sails were swung round on the masts.

"All ready, forward!" sounded from the fore-castle.

"Helm's a-lee!"

And now the vessel followed the lead of the helm, and slowly veered round from her course. But her sails were stiffened with sleet; and, after struggling a few moments, she began to lose steerage way.

"What's the matter? wont she come up?" thundered the captain from the quarter deck.

"No, sir. Every sail and block is frozen, and the yards wont swing!"

The schooner was now too near the surf to wear, and time would be lost in clearing away the frozen yards; and it was probable that, even then, the sails would not work. The captain therefore gave orders to the man at the wheel to head the schooner toward the shore, hoping to keep along at a safe distance from the breakers until he could discern some lighthouse signal—for, surely, they must be near some port. And

now on dashed the vessel—parting the waters with its prow, and leaving a snowy wake behind.

There suddenly came a lull in the storm, and silence seized upon those on deck. The helmsman was tugging hard at his station; the sleet was fast congealing, and forming an icy carpet for the deck; the captain stood at the weather rail, watching the bow of the schooner as it ploughed along.

"We'll weather it yet, if we are as far south as I think we are!" he said to the mate, who came and stood beside him. "Or," he continued, in a lower tone, "if worst comes to worst, we must try our luck at a midnight swim in the Michigan!"

Again the gale rose, and with redoubled fury. Between its voice and the hoarse rushing of the waters came the creaking of the overstrained wheel, the bending and swaying of spars, the rattling of frozen cordage and the icy sails as they flapped together, and the almost human groan of the vessel's timbers as some giant wave-blow struck her sides. But still the embracing billows carried her along in the grasp of their strong arms; still she swept on—to her doom!

"Breakers ahead! close under our bow!" was shouted from the fore-castle.

"Hard a-port! Harder, for heaven's sake!" thundered Captain Mallory.

"Ay, ay, sir."

But hardly had the words escaped the sailor's lips, ere, like a mad steed urged on by its rider, the schooner rushed to her fate. There was a terrible shock. Her timbers stove, the masts were snapped like reeds, every man was prostrated on deck, and it was with difficulty that they retained their hold, while a great wave made a complete breach over the vessel.

But amid this peril, Captain Mallory bore himself like a true sailor. Encouraging his men, the small gun which the schooner bore was loaded, and report after report went rumbling toward the shore on the wings of the wind, startling men from their dozing by their cottage fires, and carrying a story of distress and shipwreck in its booming tones.

CHAPTER III.

"Riaeth the winter's sun
Over the sea;
All white and pitless
Down looketh he;
Still comes the winter wind
Howling and free;
Still thunders the surf,
And the ice lines the shore;
But again shall that gallant ship
Sail never more."

"'Tis a wild night—a dreadful night!" exclaimed old Farmer Benson to his wife, as they

sat by a blazing wood fire in their little cabin, near the lake shore, listening to the sound of the wind and the beating of the waters against the foot of the cliff upon which their cottage stood.

"Yes, that it is!" said good Dame Benson, laying down her knitting and removing her spectacles. "This is just such a storm as we used to have down on the seacoast of old Maine; the water roars just as the ocean used to. I declare, I hope no vessels are on the lake to-night! What do you think, father?" And an anxious look overspread her placid face.

"They'd make harbor somewhere before night-fall; the storm's been brewing this six-and-thirty hours," replied the farmer. "No captain would risk it—but hark! Martha, that's a gun, as sure as I live! A vessel's on the reef!" And the old man sprang to his feet, as a dull, heavy boom came up to the cabin.

"Yes. The good Lord help the poor crew!" cried Mrs. Benson, going to the window. "Another gun—and another! O, father, can't something be done to save 'em? Can't you send up a light, or something to keep up their poor hearts? And if their vessel keeps afloat till morning, they may be saved!"

"That's what I have thought, Martha!" said Mr. Benson, putting on his storm-coat and taking down his lantern and tarpaulin from the wall. "Call up the boys, while I get things ready, and signal 'em some way—though, God knows, their chances for rescue are small enough such a night as this!"

And while Mrs. Benson was arousing her two sturdy sons, who slept in the little loft of the cabin, the old man brought from his cellar a few rockets, and, taking his lantern, went out on the cliff. The boys appeared almost immediately—for they, too, had heard the guns from the lake—and joined their father outside the cabin; and presently a vivid and ruddy light was sent streaming up into the sky from the summit of the bluff.

The signal was undoubtedly seen by the wrecked men, for in another moment their gun again sent forth its sullen roar; and again a streaming rocket from the shore bade them not despair. But each party well knew that no help could come till the morning broke; nor even then, if the gale should not abate—for no boat could outride the mad waves—and their only hope lay in their vessel's capability of enduring the night through.

"Well, lads, it's no use standing here, as I can see," said the farmer. "We've let 'em know we heard 'em—and when mornin' comes, if our boat can stand the sea, we'll pull out to their

help, if their vessel's to be seen. Let us go in, now!"

The surf thundered at the foot of the cliff; and every now and then the wind, tearing off the white caps of the waves, tossed them high up to the very spot where the farmer and his sons stood. Nothing appeared in the thick darkness save the white flashing of the line of foam below.

"Yes, father, I suppose we'd best go in and wait till morning, though it's hard to leave the poor fellows to this storm!" answered one of the farmer's sons, as they retraced their way to their cabin.

"The vessel may stand it; the reef is low. Or, if she should go to pieces, the men may be washed among the rocks. Some of 'em will escape, I have faith to believe," said the farmer. "Here, Martha, put all your lamps in the windows! The sight of their shine may kindle hope in them poor fellows' hearts!"

And so the lamps were blazing in the cabin windows, their cheerful flame shining far out on the darkness, and the dwellers in the cabin sat down to await the tardy dawn; while amid the long hours of blackness, cold and storm, the half-frozen crew of the schooner sent the voice of their gun over the lake, realizing the while, as every fresh wave-stroke beat against their maimed vessel, that but a few planks lay between them and eternity.

"If she holds together till daybreak, we shall be saved. And she may—for the schooner is staunch and strong as iron!" said Captain Mallory, outwardly calm and firm, encouraging his men. "I know where we are—on the reef; and I believe the gale is going down. It doesn't blow so hard as when we struck. Keep up stout hearts, my men! I believe we shall be saved! Let us pray that we may see our homes, our wives and children again!"

And there, amid the winter storm, the voice of prayer mingled with the hoarse notes of the wind; and the husky "amens" floated out on the waters of Lake Michigan.

The morning broke bright and clear. The gale had abated, and the waves had spent their fury; but still a heavy swell came rolling in from the northern waters, offering resistance to any boat which might put out.

Farmer Benson and his sons were early on the cliff. Upon a low chain of rocks, at about a quarter of a mile's distance, lay the hulk of a large schooner. The waves were beating upon it, breaking it up piece by piece; the masts had been washed away, and the dismantled rigging

hung over the wreck. Far up on the forecastle, farthest from the water, were seen huddled together the shivering forms of the crew.

A consultation was held between Farmer Benson, his sons, and their neighbors who had been summoned to render assistance. Two large and stout fishing-boats were dragged down to the shore; and the two young men, with others, volunteered to put out to the reef. But the swell was too strong; and as often as they ventured, were the boats hurled back upon the beach again.

The shipwrecked crew were now seized with despair. Their vessel was fast breaking up—no boat could come to their aid—within sight of land, they must perish! Although advised by the captain to patiently abide their time, and put their trust in Him who had brought them through the perils of the night and would not surely desert them now, two of the crew resolved to endeavor to gain the shore by swimming, and cast themselves into the waves—alas! only to meet a speedy death on the freezing, icy flood, and to be cast ashore, stark and stiff, at the feet of the men who would, how gladly! have gone to their relief.

The day advanced. The winter sun stood higher, casting a flood of glorious beams over the lake and shore; but his rays could not warm the benumbed men on the wreck in whose hearts hope was near dying out.

"I believe we are doomed, Grant!" said the captain at last, speaking in a low voice to his mate. "They dare not put out for us in this heavy sea. But it won't do to let the men know it. We must keep up a show of courage before them!"

"I believe, sir, they are trying to launch the boat again," said the mate. "*They are, sir! They may reach us!*"

"Impossible, in this heavy swell!" replied the captain, gloomily, eyeing the boat which, just then, had entered the surf, propelled by the strong arms of Farmer Benson's two sons, who had avowed that "with freezing men under their very eyes, they could not stand there and see them die."

"You can't reach the wreck, boys!" said Mr. Benson and his neighbors.

"We'll try it!" they answered, hopefully. "At least, we can but make the attempt."

God sometimes favors the most daring undertakings, as he did that of those two noble young men. With hushed breath and beating hearts, the gazers on the shore and the men on the wreck watched their buffetings with the waters—now hurled back among the angry surf, now

beating over the high billows, fighting their way by the sheer force of nerve and will.

At last, thank God, the reef is gained! The boat navigates among the low, jutting rocks—the oar-strokes of those athletic arms bring it up close under the dismantled wreck—and the benumbed men, with husky voices and heavy heart-throbs, slide down, one after another, till all are there, and then they put back for the shore.

This passage is far less perilous—the swell of the incoming waves favors the heavily freighted boat—every oar-stroke tells—and now they rush through the surf, the boat's keel grates upon the hard sand, and, thank God, they are saved!

Kind and busy hands were ready to administer food, bring warm apparel, and kindle fires for the nourishment of those rescued men, in Farmer Benson's cabin on the cliff; and, certainly, no king upon his throne, or princes of the blood royal line, ever bore prouder hearts than the farmer and his two stalwart, noble sons, as they listened to the tearful expressions of gratitude which were rendered by Captain Mallory and his men.

And you may be sure, reader, that never more thankful tears gushed from human eyes than those with which Mrs. Mallory and her son greeted the return of the rescued husband and father, on the next night, when he stood among them at his own fireside.

"And now we will have a festival! The wedding need no longer be deferred—hey, Annie? What! blushing?" he said, playfully, as the young girl, who had crept near his side to listen to his recital of the dangers of the storm, blushed rosy red at this remark, and shyly withdrew her hand from George's earnest clasp. "Yes, the wedding shall come off New Year's night, Annie!" said the captain, good-humoredly. "I believe all you were waiting for, was father's safe return! And here he is again with you, thank God!"

Annie escaped from the parlor, whence she was soon followed by her lover; and the captain and his wife were left together.

"O, Paul, such a terrible night!" said Mrs. Mallory, still shuddering at the thought of his recital, and sobbing on his breast.

"Yes, Mary, 'twas terrible! I thought I had known danger before; but I never came so near death as to only feel that a plank lay between me and eternity. I thought the matter over, coming up in the cars to-night; and I have decided that we can live comfortably, without my following this life any longer. I shall live at home with you, in the future. I have had my last STORM ON THE LAKES."